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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: KADHAMIYA DC CHAIR DISCUSSES SECURITY, RUMORS,  
ELECTIONS

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Robert Gilchrist for reasons  
1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) Summary: The Kadhamiya District Council (DC) Chairman told PRToff June 10 that the residents in his district remain frustrated by the continued activities of militias and terrorists and poor public services. He also said that he and other secular moderates would like U.S. support ahead of the next provincial and local elections. He said that independent moderates cannot compete with entrenched religious parties, which receive substantial financial and other support from neighboring countries and which already hold most positions of power in Iraq. End summary.

#### Residents' Frustrations Feed Rumors

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¶2. (C) Kadhamiya District Council (DC) Chairman Muslim Ahmad Al-Falah (Shia, independent) expressed the view to PRToff June 10 that residents in his district, and average Baghdad residents more broadly, remain frustrated by security and services. Al-Falah said that average citizens do not understand why militia and terrorist activities persist in Baghdad. He said average citizens also do not understand why electricity has not been restored to at least pre-war levels, noting that Kuwait was able to restore its infrastructure in less than six months after the Gulf War. PRToff replied that Kuwaitis did not experience the continued violence that Iraq currently confronts, which makes reconstruction more difficult. ( MNF-I comment : The electricity shortages are complicated. A number of factors contribute to the problem, such as the shortages of oil to power the district wide generators. To overcome this difficulty, the population has started using individually run generators to provide electricity for personal needs. High and low voltage network rehabilitation continues throughout Kadhamiya in conjunction with the Baghdad Joint Planning Commission.)

¶3. (C) Al-Falah cautioned that frustrations are frequently turned against the U.S., with rumors repeatedly circulating in the streets surrounding the U.S. intentions in Iraq. He specifically noted rumors that the U.S. is orchestrating car bombings in order to punish communities where insurgent or militia presence is particularly strong. He said that militiamen and extremists also spread rumors that the U.S. is deliberately depriving communities of electricity as a form of collective punishment, adding that such rumors are gaining traction among neutral citizens.

¶4. (C) Al-Falah said that constituents in Kadhamiya want the U.S. to crack down on JAM elements in the area, although they fear getting caught in the crossfire. He said that average citizens believe that U.S. forces are more capable of eliminating militias in the area than Iraqi forces because Iraqi army and police are too weak and too penetrated by militiamen.8 (MNF-I comment : Coalition Forces are seeing a separation of JAM Special Groups and JAM traditional elements which we believe is exploitable in order to reduce JAM,s

overall ability to engage in sectarian conflict and intimidation.)

¶5. (C) Al-Falah said that although average Kadhamiya citizens are increasingly suspicious of U.S. intentions in Iraq, they feel more secure when there are U.S. patrols and checkpoints in the area. He said his constituents believe U.S. troops will carry out their duties in a professional and even handed manner, while they fear that Iraqi forces are corrupt, penetrated by criminal elements, and sectarian.

Moderates Need U.S. Support to be Competitive in Elections  
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¶6. (C) AL-Falah asked why the U.S. does not provide more support to secular moderates. He said that independents like him cannot compete against religious parties such as the Islamic Supreme Council for Iraq (ISCI) when it receives millions of dollars of support annually from Iran and runs its own militia. He claimed that the U.S. does not do enough to support Iraqis who most closely identify its moderate, democratic values.

¶7. (C) Al-Falah claimed that he and his moderate associates increasingly feel that there is little incentive to cooperate with the U.S. He said that associating with the U.S. puts him in danger and brings few tangible benefits to his community. He claimed that he continues to work with the U.S. only because he believes it is the only country powerful enough to stabilize and rebuild Iraq, and because he identifies with U.S. values.

Comment  
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¶8. (C) Al-Falah is a secular moderate who is among the PRT,s most cooperative contacts and has worked closely with the U.S. since the fall of the previous regime. Over the past six months Al-Falah has increasingly complained that the U.S. is not doing enough to support secular moderates like him. He constantly asks PRToffs how the U.S. can claim to support liberal democracy while letting extremist militias control the streets and working closely with pro-Iran theocratic parties like ISCI and Dawa.

¶9. (C) Al-Falah,s comments about the power of anti-U.S. propaganda on the Iraqi street track with what we hear from other contacts. Conspiracy theories are treated by Baghdadi,s as fact and the populace appears to be increasingly predisposed to believing the worst. End comment.  
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